ERIC Document Resume	See Instruction Sheet	DATE OF RESUME 10/25/65	DATE RECEIVED

A. PUBLICATION DATA

1. ERIC NUMBER	2. ORIGINATOR CONTROL NO(S).	3. IDENTIFICATION NO.	DO NOT WRITE IN SPACE BELOW
ED002513	N.A.	N.A.	

4. AUTHOR(S): Eide, Carla, and Nance, Afton Dill

5. TITLE OF DOCUMENT ABSTRACTED: Conference on the Education of Spanish-Speaking Children and Youth

6. PUBLICATION TITLE: N.A.

7. EDITOR(S): N.A.

8. PLACE OF ORIGIN: ORG. Decoto Elementary School District; ST. Union City, Calif.; CITY, STATE; TELE. EXT.; INST/LOC CODE

9. PUBLISHER OR SOURCE: Decoto Elementary School District, Union City, California

10. VOL.	11. PAGES	12. MO./YR.	13. TOTAL PP.
N.A.	N.A.	4/63	27

MICROFILM COPY AVAILABLE: YES ☒ NO ☐

COPYRIGHT GRANTED: YES ☐ NO ☒

COPYRIGHT RELEASE FILED: YES ☐ NO ☐

TYPE OF REPORT: PROPOSAL ☐ IN-PROGRESS ☐ FINAL ☒ FOLLOW-UP ☐

OTHER ERIC REFERENCES:

ERIC SATELLITE CODE

B. INDEXING DATA

14. SUBJECT AREA

15. TYPE OF ENDEAVOR: Report

16. INDEXING TERMS (8-12)

Spanish-speaking	children	parents		good citizenship	
elementary school	economically disadvantaged	pupils		cultural differences	
culturally deprived	Mexican-Americans		higher education	teaching reading	
educational needs	primary education		health needs		

17. ABSTRACT (MAX. 250 WORDS)

Reports include : providing a kindergarten program that is flexible and meets a wide range of interests and needs; guiding Spanish-speaking children and youth through achieving better understanding; using standardized tests of intelligence and achievement with Spanish-speaking pupils to obtain the most valid results; helping children to read by arranging special classes to provide many experiences and motivational activities; teaching English as a second language using the audiolingual method and following the sequence of understanding, speaking, reading, and writing; using the audiolingual method of listen and respond to teach English as a second language; reporting pupil progress to parents by means of report cards, achievement grading, and ability grading; gaining the confidence of parents and pupils through an understanding of such problems as economic needs, social and cultural difficulties, and differences among Mexican-American and American families; providing for health needs through the establishment of good rapport with members of the Mexican-American community, in order to break down barriers to the efficient performance of functions; building good citizenship by realistically teaching children the values and expectations of their new culture as it relates to employment; helping Spanish-speaking youth take advantage of opportunities for higher education through early identification of dropouts, small classes, and sympathetic and knowledgeable teachers; and using Spanish as the language of instruction to provide a successful educational experience through which Spanish-speaking children could take advantage of their own abilities.

ERIC No.

18. SOURCE OF ABSTRACT

C. FUNDING DATA

19. SUPPORTING ORGANIZATION	20. DIVISION OR DEPT.	21. CONTRACT NO. / PROJECT NO.
	22. TOTAL COST OF PROJECT	
	23. DURATION OF PROJECT	U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare Office of Education

ERIC Form 1

207-070 O - 66 - 13

ED002513

Report of

Conference on the Education of Spanish-speaking Children and Youth

Decoto
Elementary School District
Union City, California

Co-sponsored by •
Bureau of Elementary Education, California State Department of Education • Decoto Elementary School District • Office of Alameda County Superintendent of Schools

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE
Office of Education

This document has been reproduced exactly as received from the person or organization originating it. Points of view or opinions stated do not necessarily represent official Office of Education position or policy.

April 5-6, 1963

THE CENTER FOR CULTURAL STUDIES
Adams State College of Colorado
Alamosa

CJ635

REPORT OF EDUCATION OF SPANISH-SPEAKING CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Decoto Elementary School District
Union City, California
April 5-6, 1963

Prepared for Publication
by Carla Eide
Afton Dill Nance

ED002513

FOREWORD

Recognizing the educational needs of the culturally deprived Spanish speaking children and youth in the Decoto School District and throughout Alameda County, this conference was planned to bring to the attention of administrators and teachers in this and other counties an attempt to meet these needs. The conference was co-sponsored by the Alameda County Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Trustees and the Superintendent of the Decoto School District with the cooperation of the Alameda County Board of Education and consultants from the State Department of Education.

We wish to acknowledge the contribution of all of those who volunteered to assist in this program: the staff of the Decoto School District, the staff of the Alameda County Superintendent of Schools, the consultants for the State Department of Education, and the many school districts that contributed leadership. We hope that the report of this conference will be of assistance to all those interested in meeting the needs of Spanish-speaking children.

Harold Schwenfeld

George T. Renteria

CIJC 0003

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

Welcome - - - - - - - George Rusteika - - - - - - - - - - - - - 1

The Spanish-speaking People of California-A Look Ahead -
George L. Sanchez - - - - - - - - - 2

The Culture of the Spanish-speaking People in California
A Panel Discussion - - Harold Schoenfeld, Leader- - - - 3

Helping Spanish-speaking Children and Youth Achieve their
full Potential - - - - -Helen Heffernan - - - - - - - - 12

Reports of Study Sections

Providing a Good Start in the Kindergarten - - - - - - - 18

Guiding Spanish-speaking Children and Youth - - - - - - - 20

Using Standardized Tests of Intelligence and
Achievement with Spanish-speaking Pupils - - - - 23

Helping Pupils to Read - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 25

Teaching English as a Second Language - - - - - - - - - 27

Reporting Pupil Progress to Parents - - - - - - - - - - 32

Gaining the Confidence of Parents and Pupils - - - - - 35

Providing for Health Needs - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 42

Building Good Citizenship - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 44

Helping Spanish-speaking Youth Take Advantage of
Opportunities for Higher Education - - - - - - - 46

Building on the Assets-Teaching Spanish to Spanish-
speaking Pupils - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 47

WELCOME

George Rusteika
Assistant Superintendent, Curricular Services
Alameda County Schools

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to this Conference on the Education of Spanish-speaking Children and Youth. The conference is co-sponsored by the Bureau of Elementary Education, California State Department of Education, the Decoto Elementary School District and the Alameda County School Department. Planning for the conference began ,many months ago and many persons have made thoughtful contributions.

However, perhaps the most valuable contributions will be made by the members of this audience all of whom have given up a portion of a spring holiday to be in attendance here. Perhaps when you left your schools yesterday many persons thought, "Well, there they go on their vacation." However, I know that many of you have professional commitments which carry through the entire week. It is because of this attitude of individual professional responsibility that California occupies a place of national leadership in education.

The purpose of this conference is to come to a better understanding and acceptance of cultural differences and to explore ways of improving educational opportunities for an important sector of our population. As each person in attendance here brings his own knowledge and experience to bear on the problems, we will find our time well spent, and this conference may mark the beginning of an new era in the education of Spanish-speaking children and youth.

THE CULTURE OF THE SPANISH-SPEAKING PEOPLE IN CALIFORNIA

A Panel Discussion

Leader: Harold Schoenfeld, Superintendent, Decoto Elementary School District, Union City

Participants:

Mrs. Beatrice Arce, Coordinator, Spanish Program, Brawley Elementary School District

Refugio Cabello, Principal, Decoto Elementary School, Union City

Anthony W. Ochoa, Dean of Boys, Hayward Union High School District

Ramon L. Vega, Head, Art Department, Oakland Senior High School

Dr. Schoenfeld introduced the participants, and their remarks as taken from a tape recording are presented in the sections which follow:

Dr. Schoenfeld: Mrs. Arce, you have obviously been successful by all standards. Could you give us a little of your background and some insights into important experiences in your life? What were your father and mother like? In what kind of neighborhood did you live? Did you have any problems?

Mrs. Arce: I will gladly give you a little personal family background. My father is Portuguese and my mother is Mexican. My father was born in Portugal, my mother in Chihuahua, Mexico. They met in the Imperial Valley, married, and in the course of time had seven daughters. My father was a farmer. Can you imagine a farmer with seven daughters?

Anyway, we had a very interesting home language environment. My father spoke Portuguese, my mother spoke Spanish, and when my sisters and I started school they insisted that we speak English to them. So here was three-way communication - mother spoke

Spanish, father spoke Portuguese and the children spoke English. My mother did not have the opportunity in Mexico to go to school. She did learn to read and write on her own, but she saw to it that when her daughters started to school that they learned to read and write English and to do much better than she was able to do. My father was of the same opinion so he saw that we went to school regularly and stayed in school. We had some other important helpers on the way. These helpers were the teachers in the school.

I have a strong feeling of gratitude for some of these teachers that helped us along the way. My first school experience was in a small city school system. I can close my eyes and think back to my first day of school. I remember distinctly, Father waited with my sister and me, until the bus arrived. He gave the bus driver the necessary details - names and ages. We boarded the school bus. There wasn't enough space for us to sit together so I sat with some little Mexican girls and my sister sat with some little Anglo girls. We arrived at the point of debarkation; she went with her companions, I went with mine. We ended up in two different schools. At noon time it finally hit me, "My sister isn't here." I started to cry or bawl. The principal, naturally, came to give the helping hand. We got into her car, drove over to the big school, found my sister and brought her back with me to our school. I later learned that in this small town there were three elementary schools. One for the Mexican children, one for the Anglo, and one for the Negro. This school experience was very short because we moved from that district to a rural school district, which had a wonderful school. Now, as an adult and an educator, I realize how fortunate we were to have had an opportunity to attend this school. The school had an enrollment of about 200 pupils - children from many different racial backgrounds.

Dr. Schoenfeld asked me if I had had any problems. I would say that at that time my problem was a language problem. We did not speak English. When we enrolled at this school it was not "my" problem, it was "our" problem. We were all learning English. Those pupils that knew the language naturally helped us along by being our teachers during the recesses and play periods. This school provided more than just the important learning of the basic three R's. It also provided a variety of other experiences - camping, field trips, inter-school visits, community projects, club work and the like. I believe that some of these other activities were very important in helping my sisters and me develop our potential to be leaders, and to be able to stand before a group and express ourselves.

Living out in the country, we had to provide our own entertainment and naturally we played school. We taught each other and the older taught the younger. Incidentally, this play was greatly encouraged by our parents. It was a chain reaction affair.

My high school and junior college instructors were also helpful in encouraging me to continue into higher education. At the university my determination to succeed was the greatest influence to work hard, which I had to do.

An important factor that contributed to my success and that of my sisters was parental interest and encouragement to succeed at whatever we attempted. Other factors were hard work, and the opportunity to have friendly, sincere and patient teachers from the very beginning who recognized that we had potential and helped us to develop our abilities.

One of my proudest experiences was when our mother received her citizenship papers from the same high school auditorium where all her seven daughters had graduated. It was a thrilling and emotional mommment for me because I was the teacher of her Citizenship Class under the Adult Education Program.

Of the farmer's seven daughters five are school teachers.

Dr. Schoenfeld: Thank you Mrs. Arce. Mr. Ochoa, I understand that you were born in Mexico. What helped you? What inspired you? Teachers? Or was it the GI Bill of Rights?

Mr. Ochoa: I guess I am the only wetback on the platform. I was born in Guadalajara, and you are asking about matters that have many ramifications. However, I can identify two chief sources of encouragement. Number one was, of course, my home. Even though my mother got only to the sixth grade and my dad got only to the equivalent of the fourth grade, there was always a tremendous emphasis placed on the personal humanistic quality of which Dr. Sanchez spoke last night. The second source of help were several of my teachers--those oasis whom you meet in the field of education. Perhaps that is why I am in education today. The ones who helped me were sincere and enthusiastic and did not look upon their professional jobs as a source of income only. They were concerned with helping their fellow men and were determined to discover all the potentials in their pupils.

How the teachers felt that I might have had any potential I don't know. The simple, friendly, personal interaction between the instructors and myself was what made me want to go on. These teachers took

special interest in encouraging me to do outside reading and to look beyond the idea of taking only vocational types of study. They encouraged me to look beyond high school and to take foreign languages, algebra, and geometry. In other words, they urged me to prepare myself for higher education.

Dr. Rusteika mentioned that I had the pleasure of working in the Hayward Union High School District. I was going through the roll of the more than 600 certificated teachers in the district recently. I was chagrined to note that in the group there was only one other person besides myself who carried a Spanish surname. I thought this was a sad reflection, considering the numbers of Spanish-speaking people in this area. I include not only my own Mexican group, but any who do speak the beautiful Spanish language. There should be more than two of us working in the schools.

I wonder how many of our people work in the Probation Department or in Social Welfare. This is simply a theoretical question. I wonder too how many are serving on college and university faculties? What a sad reflection on us as a group that there aren't more of us in those ranks.

Dr. Schoenfeld: One of the study groups will deal with the problem of getting these youngsters to go into the fields of social welfare, and probation work as well as teaching. Thank you for calling these real problems to our attention.

Mr. Vega, could you react to this same problem? Tell us a little about your parents and how you got into the teaching field.

Mr. Vega: I can also claim that I was born in Mexico. In fact all of my elementary schooling was in Mexico. I came here just in time to enter high school and I think my high school years were some of the most successful and happiest years of my life. I had two teachers who encouraged me. Mrs. Brown, the principal of the small school which I attended in Nevada was one. The school I attended was a combined elementary and high school. There were seven students in my graduation class. I think my major problem was language. In order to keep up with the rest of the students I had to dig in and learn the English language.

Now as to encouragement by my parents - they didn't care one way or the other. The only thing they were strict about was attendance at school. Their children were to attend school because they themselves hadn't had the opportunity to go to school.

If it had not been for the GI Bill of Rights I would not have gone to college. If you don't have enough money there is absolutely no opportunity to go to college. The only place you can go to work is the railroad. I did work for the railroad for two years. I asked myself, "Is this the life for me?" and I said "No", but Uncle Sam came around and called me to service.

During the service I became a citizen and also finished going to a photography school in Denver, Colorado. My main hobby was photography, so the Army decided I could become a good photographer and I enjoyed this work very much. When I came out of the service I decided there were too many photographers. Some photographers were trying to do a good job, but the field was too competitive. I worked in photography for one year and then I decided that this was not the field for me either.

I went back to the Veterans Administration and told them I wanted to go back to school. I asked, "How about giving me some tests so I will know exactly what I can do in some kind of profession?" The counselor told me, "According to our tests you can either become a priest, a social worker or a teacher." So I decided to go into teaching.

Since I was talented in art I decided to go first to an art school. I entered San Francisco Art Institute. Of all the art teachers there the only one that gave me any encouragement during the three and a half years I attended, was my photographer instructor. The rest of them didn't care one way or the other. So I entered the Arts and Crafts School in Oakland, and there many of the instructors had the same attitude with the exception of one or two who tried to give me some encouragement. In all I attended the two schools for about five years. Then I decided I had enough art background, and should go about getting some book learning. I considered myself up there on Cloud 7 as a real artist -- going around in sandals and living on wine and bread.

But it came back to this question: "What am I going to do with this art background? It is not going to earn me a living." So I decided to go into teaching. I transferred over to San Francisco State College for my teacher training program. There I laid art aside and had no practice whatsoever from then on. I dug into the book part of the program, and I had a lot of difficulty. I wasn't used to studying. I didn't know how to read, write or even speak well. I only knew how to paint. During this time I learned how inefficient I was. For about three and a half years I went to San Francisco State. In fact I went to State until I found a job in Oakland.

At San Francisco State College I found no encouragement whatsoever. In fact I got discouragement from my counselor. This is something I wanted to mention because you will find teachers who

are sympathetic toward your problem and others who simply cannot see your problems at all. The two people who gave me encouragement during my college years were my art supervisor and my art director. I am here today to give you some background as to how I got here and some understanding of the difficulties Mexican-Americans sometimes have in getting an education. In my case, if I had not had some sympathetic teachers I would probably not be a teacher myself today.

Dr. Schoenfeld: Thank you, Mr. Vega. Let us go on to another story so that we can further understand some of the problems experienced by Mexican-Americans in getting an education.

Mr. Cabello: I am a first generation Mexican-American. My parents came from Mexico. My mother came from the central plateau in Mexico. Her family were tenant farmers. My father from Guadalajara which is a fairly large city. He came from a family that were shopkeepers. My parents met in New Mexico. They had come to the United States in 1916 during the Mexican Revolution which started in 1911. At that time thousands and thousands of people came from Mexico and settled in the southwestern states. My father was a carpenter by trade but when he came to Arizona he became a miner because timbermen were needed in the mines. So consequently I am from an old mining family if you go back to 1916. I think there are about four or five factors that have helped me get an education and become a principal in Decoto. One is moving out of the barrio. What is a barrio? A barrio is a neighborhood where Mexican people settle. They settle there because they feel secure. They have a common language, a common culture. They do not have to communicate with the Anglo-Saxon whatsoever - not even when they work side by side do they have to communicate with the Anglo-Saxon because the foreman usually can speak Spanish. The people in the barrio are insulated - not isolated but insulated. They have insulated themselves from the outside world and the sources of hostility and discrimination. They have chosen to live in ghettos which are at least partly voluntary. I have happened to know a few ghettos in my time - in Phoenix, in Tucson, in a mining camp, in Miami. You name them and I have been there at least in the barrio. Moving out of the barrio into the community was the number one factor leading me to success. Now why is this? When we moved out of the barrio I had to communicate and I learned to speak English. The people I met learned from me and I learned from them. Consequently I learned some of their values and they learned some of my values.

The second factor is, I think, the most important. This is the encouragement which people can give to one another. Now my parents didn't seem to care one way or the other if I went to school. They were indifferent. Indifferent to the point that they did not go to school, did not join the PTA, did not understand the report cards. They did not complain when they were

maltreated, they seemed to be indifferent. But I don't think my parents were really indifferent about my getting an education because they were strict about discipline in the school and about attendance. I told Dr. Schoenfeld I can remember when my mother took me by the ear and made me go to school when I thought that I had a stomach ache or when I felt that I didn't want to go to school. My parents wanted me to respect the teachers.

As far as the teachers were concerned many of them just didn't care one way or the other about me. I can count on my fingers those people that helped me along the way. One person I will never forget is Miss Fitzgerald, a high school teacher. You know in high school I dropped out twice. Once when I was a fresh man and once when I was a junior. It was this teacher who took the trouble to go to my home and try to talk me into coming back to school. Two different times she took this trouble. If she hadn't taken this trouble I probably would have been a dropout. When I came out of the service she was one of the first persons who came to see me. So I have a great debt to pay to Miss Fitzgerald.

Another important factor in my life has been the service during World War II. Now why is this? This gave me an opportunity to see other lands, meet other people, come in contact with other values, and consequently it was a way of getting out of the Southwest. Probably if the second World War had not come along I would have been in the Southwest all of my life. Now I do know that there are other places and other ways of living.

Helpful factor number four, was the GI Bill of Rights. Even with encouragement you need money, and the GI Bill of Rights was there for me to take advantage of. I had to work even though I had the GI Bill of Rights. I told you before that I am from a mining family; I worked in the mines when I was sixteen years old. Every summer when I came from college I worked in the mines. I also dropped out one year to work in the mines in order to have enough money to finish my schooling. I think all of these factors have been valuable to me, but the encouragement of teachers is the most important.

Dr. Schoenfeld: Thank you. You said, "you got out of the barrio." Can you speak on this a little further?

Mr. Cabello: A barrio is a community that is made up predominantly of Mexican people, either first generation or second generation. All of their culture, all of their values, are Mexican. Their church, their stores, their school are located in the barrio. Consequently their community is a self-supporting community. The only time the people go out is to visit a barrio in another part of town or for a dance which is usually held nearby. I think the people live there because they feel com-

fortable but they miss many valuable experiences. You see, I often go back to the barrio one way or another even though I have not lived in the barrio for some time.

Dr. Schoenfeld: I would like to ask another question of the members of the panel. Who is the head of a family in the Mexican culture? In the northern European culture we ask mama to help solve most school and family problems. But in the cultural pattern of the Mexican family who should the principal consult?

Mr. Ochoa: Which family are you talking about? I didn't say anything about this because it is quite personal. My mother was a nun in Mexico during the Revolution of 1916-17 and at the age of 38 went back into the lay world and met my dad. His semiprofessional position was Inspector del Inspectores. How do you like that? Inspector of Inspectors. Who will guard the guard? Mrs. Arce said that her folks met in Imperial Valley. My folks met aboard a streetcar. Mother was 12 years older than dad, so therefore, if you were to ask me, who is the head of the family, there was no doubt who was the head of our family.

However, it would appear for the most part in those families that I do have the pleasure of knowing there is certainly no doubt but that the husband is head of the household. When we try to get young ladies for babysitters, we have to hire the sitter not through the mother but through the father. Knowing my people, we go down together, the wife and I, with the children and introduce ourselves if we are anxious to get the services of the young lady.

Dr. Schoenfeld: I am sure that we would all enjoy continuing this discussion further, but the time has come for me to make a brief summary. The experiences of the persons on this panel have been very different. One thing they have in common, they have all chosen education as their field of professional service and they all are successful in this field.

Several have spoken of teachers who were not interested in their problems. However, without exception each person has mentioned that the sympathetic and understanding teachers they did have were vital factors in their success. Mr. Vega has said that if it had not been for the encouragement of teachers that he probably would not have become a teacher himself. Others have also emphasized this point.

It would seem that the experiences of these four persons would raise questions regarding a commonly accepted statement that Mexican-American parents are not interested in the education of their children and have a low level of aspiration for them. It would appear that though in some cases the parents did not

understand the purposes of the school very well, they were nevertheless insistent on regular attendance and respect for teachers. Perhaps we should not be too sure that Mexican-American parents have no belief in education as a means of advancement for their children.

HELPING SPANISH-SPEAKING CHILDREN AND YOUTH ACHIEVE THEIR FULL POTENTIAL

Helen Heffernan, Chief
Bureau of Elementary Education

The entire history of the United States might be written as a story of the acculturation of groups of diverse cultural and ethnic origin into a cohesive social and political unity. Our democracy advances toward the realization of its ultimate goals as it meets the needs of all its members in such a way that each individual of whatever cultural or ethnic origin finds within it the conditions necessary for him to achieve his potential in personal development and in contribution to the general welfare.

In 1954, John Burma reported:[1]

> The educational picture for Mexican-American children is a constantly brightening one. Segregation is both less common and less vicious. School systems and teachers are better equipped and more deeply motivated to handle special problems. Mexican-American standards of living have improved. An increasing percentage of the children are children of native born parents and bring to school a considerable, if imperfect, knowledge of American customs and language. Each year a greater number of Mexican-Americans are finishing high school,. . . more are attending college.

If he were writing in 1963, Mr. Burma would have to modify this optimistic statement somewhat, particularly if he were viewing the problem in California. Recent years have witnessed an astonishing immigration from Mexico. The 1960 Census indicates that from 11,000 to 15,000 children of school age in California are children of Mexican immigrants who have lived in this country less than four years. Another study reveals that in the decade between 1950 and 1960 the number of persons with Spanish surnames has increased in California by 87.6 percent. In the year 1961, a total of 219,335 aliens from Mexico reported California addresses. This is 42 percent of the total number in the United States and nearly 48 percent of the number in the five Southwest States. In 1961, 54 percent of the total United States immigration from Mexico or 22,434 persons gave California as the state of their permanent address.

---

[1] John Burma, Spanish-Speaking Groups in the United States. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1954

The magnitude of the number of these newcomers means that the process of acculturation must go on unabated. The children of these new immigrants from Mexico have not had a chance to learn American mores. They bring to school no knowledge of English. They are frequently linguistically impoverished in their own language because their socioeconomic conditions at home failed to provide the experiences in which language develops.

The Value of the Dual Heritage

Sometimes we think that if we refuse to look at a problem it will go away. But, in the case of the numbers of linguistically limited children entering our schools, the longer we neglect seeking intelligent solutions, the greater the problem will grow. Without restrictions on immigration we may expect Mexico to send us her surplus population. May our resources and our generosity of spirit be such that these newcomers will find here the same refuge which many of <u>our</u> forebears sought and found in this land!

School people usually view children as assets with unrealized potentials which education can develop. These children from Mexico have a dual heritage. They have been born into a culture which views life and the world in a characteristic manner; they will grow up in another where values are frequently quite dissimilar. In their lives they may combine the best attributes of both.

Importance of Effective English Speech

One of the most important means of acculturation is through language. The child of Mexican descent must acquire effective use of the language of his adopted culture. Nothing short of accuracy and precision in the use of English will open the doors to any but the most menial occupation and make him truly a part of the social, political and economic life of the United States.

In the past, schools have generously said, "give them a year"--that meant retard them a year--to provide time for them to "pick up the language" from their playmates and in whatever odd moments of instruction they might receive from teachers usually overburdened with excessive class loads. Of course, since every human organism wants to learn, these children did acquire some facility--a few hundred words, barely enough to meet the minimum needs for communication. Sometimes even this minimum was a handicap because teachers without time to probe their understanding more deeply took it for granted that they "spoke English" when they actually did not have enough English to meet the academic requirements of the standard educational program. And, so, these linguistically handicapped children became discouraged, frequently sullen, hated school where they experienced repeated failures and dropped out as soon as the law or a change of residence made it possible.

The picture for the future is brighter. With so many people interested in having the elementary school teach a foreign language to English-speaking children, we are beginning really to appreciate the difficulties confronted by Spanish-speaking children in mastering our much more difficult language. Progress is being made in the use of the audio-lingual method of teaching foreign languages, especially Spanish, in the schools of California. We are recognizing the necessity of providing records, tape recordings, TV lessons, so children will hear Spanish spoken by a native speaker of the subject.

Now, we begin to see ways to reverse the process and give as much or more attention to Spanish-speaking children in their efforts to learn English. No doubt we must give more attention especially throughout the entire elementary school years, 1) because English is such a difficult language with its 20 percent non-phonetic words;2) because these Mexican-American children will have to get their entire education in the language of the country which to them is a foreign language, and 3) because they must make their social, vocational and political adjustment to an English-speaking society and their entire future as worthy contributing citizens depends upon their mastery of our means of communication.

But these children have a tremendous asset--they are the ones on whom I would place my bets in any contest for perons most likely to succeed in becoming bilingual. They have motivation of the strongest kind to achieve competence in English; they have a headstart in their own mother tongue. As teachers we must help them to value this heritage and differentiate curriculum for them so that they build greater proficiency in Spanish at the same time that they are acquiring English.

Some school districts have made genuine progress in this direction. They report that Mexican-American children are developing a more wholesome self-image, are actually doing better in all school work because of the prestige derived from having their language recognized as important and present fewer discipline problems when the school provides the status-building "honors classes" in Spanish for Spanish-speaking children. Suddenly fathers and mothers have a real stake in the school. Simple books in Spanish are taken home to be shared joyously with parents. Schools where these activities are going on are experiencing genuine achievement and satisfaction in helping children preserve and enhance the values of their dual heritage.

More and more my conviction grows that language is the great barrier between the Mexican-American youth and his achievement of his potential possibilities because it is at the root of retardation in school, limited job opportunities, and ability to enter into full participation in community life. This persistent barrier has led to the formation of enclave gangs which often secure their leadership from the most daring and rebellious personality rather than from the wisest and most socially minded.

The Problem of the Dropouts

As we solve this language problem for Mexican-American children (and through adult education classes for their parents, as well) more and more effort can be directed toward helping them assess their abilities and recognize and develop their talents. In the possession of these they are like all other children; they have neither more nor less.

California has a reasonably creditable record with regard to raising the aspiration levels of Mexican-American young people who have gone through our schools. Unfortunately objective evidence on any wide scale has not been collected but intensive studies in limited areas predict what broader studies would be likely to reveal.

In a recent study Mrs. Fernanda C. Cruz[1] points out that "one of the basic factors retarding the assimilation of the American of Mexican descent in the United States has been the pattern of his employment. Large numbers of Mexican-Americans are employed for particular types of work that tend to limit their opportunities for acculturation." Mrs. Cruz limited her study to San Bernardino County as the region with the "tenth largest concentration of Mexican-Americans in the United States and to opportunities for Mexican-Americans in the teaching profession." Her study shows a heartening increase in the number of Mexican-Americans employed as teachers over the twenty-year period, as follows: in 1942-1943, San Bernardino County employed 9 Mexican-Americans; five years later (1947-48) 11 were employed; again five years later (1952-53) 48 were employed, again five years later (1957-58) 78 were employed and in 1961-62, the last year reported 131 were employed. The pattern was 9, 11, 48, 78, 131.

These figures must be compared with total employment in San Bernardino County as follows:

	Total Employes	Mexican-American
1942-43	1408	9
1952-53	2473	48
1961-62	5537	131

It is gratifying to note that two Mexican-Americans had administrative assignments in 1942-43, and ten had administrative or supervisory appointments in 1961-62.

Second generation Mexican-Americans predominated in Mrs. Cruz' study; a large number, however, spoke little or no English at the time of school entrance. Parents of Mexican-American children have been charged with failure to promote the value of education with their

children. Mrs. Cruz' study, however, indicates a growing recognition on the part of Mexican-American parents of the value and need for education for their children.

Since the economic resources of the parents are limited, many families constantly living on the brink of dire poverty, the intervention of our State and Federal Government must be invoked to provide scholarships which will enable children to complete high school and to attend college when the individual can benefit from extended education.

Opportunities for Early Education

Every study of cultural deprivation directs attention to the effect on the very young. Experiments now in progress throughout the nation involve providing nursery schools so that children may be safeguarded and guided during these strategic early years of life.

In California, a very large percent of our five-year old children attend kindergarten, perhaps as high as 95 percent of the eligible group. A few thousand children are enrolled in child care centers but no other public effort has been made to meet the needs of the nursery school age children.

In the Education Code, there is a provision for a two-year kindergarten. Districts could well consider invoking this law in behalf of Mexican-American and other children who need additional time to develop their language. This need is by no means limited to Mexican-American children. Frequently Negro children coming from the impoverished and disadvantaged areas of the South speak a patois that is unintelligible; they, too, are linguistically handicapped. Children from any socioeconomic stratum of deprivation are usually limited in language facility.

Obviously kindergartens maintained for culturally or linguistically handicapped children should hold only one session although in some instances it should be of four hours' duration to assure these children a nourishing noonday meal, conditions for a restful nap and a tempo of work and play adapted to their need. A single session would permit the teacher to work with parent groups, visit in the homes and participate in community groups concerned with assisting in social service or the acculturation process.

Districts should work to reduce class size so effective individual work can be done by the teacher. Such an improvement in education, highly desirable for all children, is imperative if we are to meet the needs of our Mexican-American children.

No area stands in greater need of concerted effort, humanitarian attitudes, systematic study and research. One measure of our humanity is how vigorously we lay hold of the insights we now have in helping these valuable human beings attain their potential possibilities for individual achievement and for worthy contributions to the general welfare.

[1]Fernanda C. Cruz, A survey of the Job Opportunities for Mexican-Americans in the Field of Public School Education, 1942-1962. Redlands: University of Redlands, M.A. Thesis, August, 1962. P. 1

STUDY SECTIONS

SECTION I

PROVIDING A GOOD START IN THE KINDERGARTEN

Chairman: Neal Kauffman, Principal, Searles Elementary School, Union City

Leader: Mildred R. Sabath, Assistant Professor of Education, Alameda County State College

Resource Person:

Mrs. Jean Sorensen, Kindergarten Teacher, Russell Elementary School, Hayward

Recorder: Mrs. Shirley Weyer, Decoto Elementary School District

Following the introductions Dr. Sabath made an opening statement which the points outlined below were stressed:

The cultural differences among children are probably as important as the physical and intellectual differences.

Because of these many differences, the kindergarten program should be flexible in order to meet the wide range of interests and needs.

The program should achieve balance, and the activities provided should be consistent with the goals as stated.

If the children are going to learn efficiently, they will accept their teachers as models. This puts grave responsibilities on the teachers. The teachers' attitudes and feelings are communicated to the children as well as their words and actions.

The good kindergarten teacher is an arranger of new experiences. She introduces new and exciting things into the classroom environment, and the children are stimulated to explore.

The teacher should help the children understand their own behavior, feelings, and reactions. When the children accept and value themselves, they can accept and value others.

The teacher is a learner about the children and then with them.

A general discussion followed at which questions regarding room environment, classroom management and ways of meeting the needs of individual children were discussed.

SECTION II

GUIDING SPANISH-SPEAKING CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Chairman: John I. MacGregor, Superintendent, Newark Elementary School District

Leader: Mrs. Thelma Gomez, Principal, Frank Kohn Elementary School, Tulare

Resource Person:

W. Keith Cakebread, Principal, Lee O. Mathson Elementary School, San Jose

Recorder: Milton Eatchel, Decoto Elementary School District, Union City

This discussion group included persons from diverse backgrounds. Teachers, principals, school administrators, counselors, social workers, college students, business executives, and representatives of the migrant ministry shared a sincere desire to achieve better understanding of Mexican-American children and youth.

Mrs. Gomez described a situation in a seventh and eighth grade school in Tulare and told how she had worked, as its principal, to gain knowledge of the children, their parents, and the community and to improve the instructional program. Changes in zoning practices had brought children of several different groups together in one school. Building respect and understanding among the pupils and their parents was one of the major problems.

Mrs. Gomez visited all the churches in the community in order to meet the children and their parents in an out-of-school situation. Home visits were made to families who were not represented at the churches. Attendance at meetings of clubs and associations and active participation in the Community Service Organization (CSO) were other activities which resulted in increased understanding.

In order to improve communication, teachers were urged to utilize all opportunities for informal conversation with the pupils. It was also suggested that they attend the meetings of the Parent Teachers Associations in the K-6 schools as many parents attended these meetings but did not go to the meetings in the intermediate school.

Whenever a child made an outstanding contribution, or achieved an unusual accomplishment, it was suggested that the teacher inform the home through a letter or home call.

The following innovations were made in the school program:

1. Interest elective groups in such topics as Spanish, music or science were established. Fifteen children were assigned to each of these groups. Their purpose was not only to provide information and stimulate interest in the subject, but to give the teachers increased opportunities to establish rapport with the pupils.

2. A full sports program was organized for before school, noon and after school. Other activities were provided for those not interested in sports.

3. An active student council was organized, and an advisory council was started to work with younger pupils in a nearby K-6 school.

4. A parent-conference program was held twice yearly.

These efforts, carried on consistently over a two year period resulted in great improvement.

A careful study of the cumulative guidance record for each child helped the principal obtain much useful information. Pre-school conferences with teachers, held as a part of the orientation procedures, were based on information in these records, and resulted in the principal and teacher arriving at agreements on plans of action for individual pupils.

During the general discussion which followed these recommendations were made:

1. Replace the formal report card with parent-teacher conferences. Districts which have tried this method have found it effective.

2. Send all school messages home in English (some difference of opinions were expressed).

3. Select teachers who are "guidance" minded.

4. Provide a stable school environment at upper grade level either in self-contained classrooms or in a strong core program.

5. Respect the Mexican heritage through participation in holiday festivities such as Cinco de Mayo.

6. Encourage all pupils to fulfill their full potential (scholarship help for higher education is available to those who qualify).

7. Employ well-qualified teachers and counselors of Mexican-American background, or those who speak Spanish and have knowledge and respect for the Mexican culture.

8. Encourage school personnel to continue to serve for several years in schools enrolling Mexican-American pupils because feelings of rapport and confidence develop slowly and are essential to the maintenance of good guidance practices.

SECTION III

USING STANDARDIZED TESTS OF INTELLIGENCE AND ACHIEVEMENT WITH SPANISH-SPEAKING PUPILS

Chairman: Mrs. Jeanella A. Helmgren, Psychologist, La Vista Elementary School District, Hayward

Leader: Karl J. Mueller, Associate Professor of Psychology, San Jose State College

Resource Person:

Mrs. Elizabeth Yearley, School Psychologist, Milpitas School District

Recorder: Estelle Crittenden, Decoto Elementary School District, Union City

Highlights of the Discussion

Scores on group tests are not valid for many members of minority groups. Cultural and socio-economic backgrounds are determining factors in scores on many group tests. Group tests now in use are simply not providing accurate information.

Individual tests are preferable to group tests, but even these are not completely valid. Their results show only the child's minimum achievement.

Scores on both group and individual tests should be interpreted critically. Teacher judgement is frequently a more accurate means of appraising the potential of a Spanish-speaking child than is a score on an intelligence test.

Opportunities should be provided for teachers to have in-service training to aid them in evaluating test scores. This training should include consideration of the effect which differences in language facility and experiential background may have upon the scores.

The possibility that a child is non-lingual rather than bi-lingual should be considered. The non-lingual child is often thing oriented and will test relatively higher on a performance test.

The greatest danger in the use of our present tests is that the scores will be accepted as valid, and normal or able children will be stereotyped as non-learners. If the teacher accepts the test scores

uncritically, he may lower his expectation of achievement for the child.

The most important factor in a child's success or failure in school is the relationship with the teacher. Good rapport is essential in order to obtain the highest achievement possible. Confidence expressed by the teacher that the child <u>can</u> learn may be the most important factor in his fulfulling his potential.

SECTION IV

HELPING PUPILS TO READ

Chairman: Gus C. Robertson, Superintendent, Irvington Elementary School District, Fremont

Leader: Mrs. Jean Conley, Teacher Aide, Decoto Elementary School District, Union City

Resource Person:

Walter J. McHugh, Associate Professor of Education, Alameda County State College

Recorder: Mrs. Elva Cooper, Decoto Elementary School District, Union City

Mrs. Conley and Dr. McHugh reported on a study of the reading problems of children in Grades 1-6. The study had been carried on at the Searles Elementary School in the Decoto School District.

The study revealed that many of the children came from impoverished homes which provided few experiences in any culture. In most of the homes no reading materials were available in either English or Spanish.

Health problems and an inadequate diet contributed to poor attendance at school. Parents and children were prejudiced and unfriendly toward the school, and felt that the school authorities were unfriendly and prejudiced toward them.

In other words the study revealed that the causes of reading disability were "multiple, complex and compound."

Groups of children who were having difficulty with reading were scheduled into a special class for one hour a day. Emphasis was on a varied program. Tape recorders were used, children wrote and then read their own stories, words and stories were dramatized. The children began to feel some sense of success, and began to lose the feeling that they were always the "dummies." They looked forward to their time in the special class.

Role-playing and other forms of dramatization were especially successful. It was noted that when the children were playing a role that they lost their accents and used better English than they did at other times. These experiences in dramatization also seemed to free the children to talk about themselves and their problems.

Children who spoke only Spanish were helped by having a special time for language development by themselves each day. Assigning another child to help them during the general activities of the day was helpful. Conversation was stimulated by the use of picture flash cards and other visual materials.

During the general discussion which followed the description of the Decoto Reading Study attention was given to the question: "Are we trying to teach children to speak and to read English simultaneously, thus causing confusion?"

Recommendations were made that the following sequence of learning be established:

1. Listening - the skills of listening should be taught - many stories of high interest value should be read to the children

2. Speaking - language and concept development should follow the listening experiences

3. Reading should be the third step and might be delayed until grades two or three

Other points made are reported in the following paragraphs:

Teachers sometimes feel that they are cheating the children if they do not have them "go through" the books for the grade whether or not the children can understand them. It is much better to continue experiences in listening and in speaking until the child has some chance of being successful in learning to read.

The assistance of children from the upper grades can sometimes be enlisted to help children in the primary grades. The old children can read to the younger ones or can listen as the younger children read. A one-to-one relationship has been found to be effective, and children who have had reading difficulties themselves are frequently most sympathetic.

Current reading materials are not well suited to the needs and interests of many Spanish-speaking children. A need exists for the development of more appropriate materials.

SECTION V

TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Chairman: Simon Nolan, Principal, Hillcrest Elementary School, Hayward

Leader: Mrs. Afton Dill Nance, Consultant, Bureau of Elementary Education

Resource Persons:

Mrs. Beatrice Arce, Coordinator, Spanish Program, Brawley Elementary School District

Blas Diaz, Crowley Elementary School, Visalia

Recorder: Mrs. Judith Anderson, Decoto Elementary School District, Union City

Mrs. Nance introduced Mr. Blas Diaz from the Crowley Elementary School. Mr. Diaz related some of the difficulties he had encountered in making a living and bringing up a family. He described the school careers of three of his children and how, in spite of many problems, all were now leading productive and successful lives as young adults. It was evident from his story that strong family ties, plus faith, courage and hard work, had been the determining factors in winning through to success. It was also evident that Mr. and Mrs. Diaz are strong supporters of education and that they take seriously their responsibilities as American citizens.

Following this presentation, Mrs. Nance opened the discussion on the teaching of English as a second language to Spanish-speaking pupils. High-lights of these remarks and the ensuing discussion are given in the sections which follow.

The fact that the children of many second and third generation Mexican-American families come to school speaking little or no English often troubles school administrators and teachers. The parents may have been high school graduates themselves, and able to speak English with great facility, but they have chosen not to teach English to their young children. Thus these children enter school with a language handicap.

One of the explanations is that even among bilingual persons, Spanish has been the language of the home - in a true sense "the mother tongue." English has been used for contacts in the worlds of school and work.

Another reason is that many of the parents of children now in elementary schools attended segregated schools where the speaking of Spanish was forbidden and its use often punished. Separate schools for Spanish-speaking children were common in many California towns before they were declared illegal in 1945. A normal resentment of this unjust treatment, plus prejudice in employment and housing, have built feelings of rejection toward the dominant culture on the part of many adults. Refusal to learn a language is a way of showing rejection which is common to minority groups in many cultures.

Many of the situations which caused this rejection are now corrected, or in the process of being corrected and a new interest in helping Spanish-speaking children achieve their full potential and claim their full measure of rights and responsibilities as American citizens is evident. Although some problems are approaching solution, others remain.

The most urgent is that of helping Mexican-American children become proficient in English. It has been common practice "to give them a year to catch up" and to accept as inevitable a certain amount of retardation as the children advance through the elementary school. In most schools, no planned sequential teaching of English as a second language has been given. The regular language program and daily use of English are relied upon to provide the necessary instruction. For some children, no further efforts <u>are</u> necessary, but many girls and boys know only failure and frustration at school because they do not thoroughly understand the language of instruction.

A planned sequential program of instruction in English should be offered. Instruction should be by the audio-lingual method, following the sequence of understanding, speaking, reading and writing. This instruction could be given to a small group within the classroom, or if a special teacher is available, the children might leave the room for special help. These groups should be kept small, and intensive drill should probably not continue for more than 20 or 30 minutes.

This drill should be accompanied by activities which will broaden experience and build concepts. Many children fail in reading because they have not had the experiences which give meaning to the written word. Reading should be delayed until the children have developed the ability to speak some English and to understand the concepts in the material to be read.

Time was insufficient for Mrs. Arce to present material she had prepared for use with the group. However, she has made this material available for inclusion in the report, and it is presented in the section which follows.

USING THE AUDIO-LINGUAL METHOD TO TEACH ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Beatrice Arce

The instructions given below are planned for a special class in the teaching of English. The group should be a small one, not more than fifteen children. The teacher should create a pleasant, friendly but businesslike atmosphere in the classroom. Good rapport between teacher and pupils is essential.

Introduction to the Teacher

1. Use Spanish to introduce your subject and yourself.

2. Explain what you will do--What-Why-How.

3. Ask the questions which follow:

   a. Why do you need to learn English? What good will it do you?

   b. Why is it important that you should know both Spanish and English?

   Allow the class to answer in Spanish.

4. Explain how you will teach the class.

   a. No Spanish should be used except to make an idea clear or to correct a mistake. In this way the teacher has good control of the class and does away with useless talk with the pupils.

   b. Make an idea clear by using only a word or two.

   c. Be sure the pupils understand and then go back to the target language.

   d. Emphasize the importance of listening to the teacher at all times and of watching his face and expression.

   e. Explain the use of the gestures used in the drill, as follows:

      (1) Open hands facing the class means listening.

      (2) Right hand brought to the ear means answer a

question or give a correct response.

(3) A hand motion meaning come to me means repeat a phrase.

(4) Holding up three fingers means repeat the phrase or three times--two fingers, two times. Raising a hand means speak louder; the teacher cannot hear.

5. Permit no pencils, paper or books on the desks. The pupils are in the class to learn to speak English by listening and repeating the phrases which the teacher says. Later on when the group has learned to speak the language and its members can converse with each other, they will have the opportunity to learn to read and write.

Points to Emphasize

1. Stress skills of listening.
2. Stress accuracy of pronunciation.
3. Work for speech at a normal rate of speed.
4. Call for clear, quick responses.
5. Set high standards of performance.
6. Maintain these high standards in all classes.

Techniques to Remember

1. Move around the classroom to correct errors immediately.
2. Introduce a variety of activities and drills.
3. Insist on speed.
4. Plan your class well and know the material thoroughly.
5. Review your plans before meeting the group.

Method

1. Present the drill first to the whole group and then to sections or rows and finally to individuals. Individuals or groups may reverse the roles in dialogue after considerable drill has been given.

2. The teacher is the model. He gives each phrase about four times: first a full choral repetition, total class; the half-choral repetition, one-half the class; row by row (chain drill); then individual repetition.

3. The teacher uses gestures as a director leads an orchestra.

4. Keep the drill lively; give enough material to challenge the fast, the average, and the slow.

5. During the first two days give only a brief drill; later the time given to drill can be increased.

6. Change activities frequently. Watch for fatigue.

7. Speak with natural speed; slow down to make a statement clear but pick up speed again.

8. Have variety but give frequent reviews.

9. Start the class differently each day by adding something new.

10. Provide a logical sequence, not a chopped up lesson of unrelated parts.

11. Get the pupils ready for dialogues because they are the heart of the language class.

12. If a child has trouble pronouncing, pronounce the word syllable by syallable but then give him the word in the whole phrase and have him repeat it in that form.

13. The steps in the language lesson are as follows:

    (a) listen

    (b) imitate

    (c) repeat

    (d) memorize

SECTION VI

REPORTING PUPIL PROGRESS TO PARENTS

Chairman: Emanual P. Bono, Principal, Russell Elementary School, San Lorenzo

Leader: Mrs. Carla Eide, Supervisor, Decoto Elementary School District, Union City

Resource Person:

Ruth Overfield, Consultant, Bureau of Elementary Education, State Department of Education

Recorder: Beverly Stoermer, Decoto Elementary School District, Union City

Methods used to report pupil progress to parents in the Decoto School District, in the Russell Elementary School of San Lorenzo, and in the Alvarado Schools were presented.

A new report card has recently been developed for the Decoto Elementary Schools. It uses the marks, O, S, and U, and also indicates whether the mark is being given for above, below or on-grade level work. The philosophy is to find a marking system which will encourage children rather than promote discouragement and failure. Parent-teacher conferences are also now being tried in this district.

Russell City is located by the city dump and used to be predominately Negro but is now largely Mexican-American. Most of the families are on relief. Economic problems become involved with educational problems. A reporting system is used which alternated report cards and conferences for four reporting periods. The kind of conferencing done in Russell City is different because the parents come expecting the school to help them with economic needs, and also with personal and moral problems.

In the Alvarado Schools primary and intermediate report cards are different. The primary grades are O, S and U, and the intermediate grades are A, B, C, D, F. However, the child goes to the reading level where he is working and the grade is his mark for work done at that level. The report card clearly states what grade level he is on and is established by means of standardized tests and teacher judgment.

Highlights of the discussion which followed these reports are presented below:

Many districts vacillate between the concept of grading on achievement and the concept of grading according to ability. The children whom we are discussing are different from the usual middle-class children of Anglo background. Parents should be informed about how the child adjusts to the school culture and how the school and home can work together to help the child. This can only be done through parent-teacher conferences. The purposes of reporting are to inform the parent honestly and to solicit the cooperation of the home. For the purposes of this discussion the group should assume that it is not its job to discuss straightening out the parents' way of life.

The people look to the school for more than education--they see it as an agency of government for welfare, for counseling and for the solution of personal problems. For these reasons, the school must help the parents understand what the school can do for them, and also what is beyond the schools' area of responsibility.

The next emphasis in the discussion was the basic problem of how to communicate effectively with people who do not speak English. During the discussion the following suggestions were made:

1. Some districts have report cards available in Spanish.

2. Districts which use parent conferences have an interpreter on the staff, or ask parents who do not speak English to bring with them to the conference someone who speaks both languages.

3. Orientation meetings held at the first part of the school year, often help to build understanding. At this time the teachers explain the curriculum and goals of the class. An attempt is made to have these meetings friendly as well as informative.

4. The children themselves are a good source of communication. It is important that the children understand the purposes of the school as well as the meaning of the marks on the report cards.

5. Since the purpose of parent-teacher conferences is to provide a channel for communication, they should be used to make constructive plans for the child's progress in school. They should be approached with good and constructive expectations and comments, not with an attitude of fault-finding.

Other comments regarding communication with Spanish-speaking parents were reported as follows:

In one school district recently, letters written in Spanish were included with the report card. Following this letter, the

number of parents who came for conferences increased markedly. However, the district found itself unprepared to communicate with them because few of the teachers spoke Spanish.

To a Mexican it is much worse to be embarrassed and feel insulted if a third person is present. Avoiding being made fun of or being ashamed in front of others is a fundamental attitude of the Mexican-American. For this reason, information must be given tactfully as many Mexican-Americans, especially the women, feel a great deal of anxiety about a parent-teacher conference.

Because Mexican-American persons are anxious about parent-teacher conferences and are sensitive to embarrassment before others, Mexican-American teachers who are familiar with the Spanish language and the culture of Mexican-American people should be asked to serve as interpreters. Teachers who may have only a limited knowledge of Spanish may not be adept at accurate and tactful phrasing of information.

Since the ability to speak Spanish is an important factor in communicating with the people, teachers who accept permanent employment in a school serving large numbers of Mexican-American people should be encouraged to learn Spanish.

The meeting closed with a discussion as to whether or not Mexican-American parents were interested in the education of their children. Major points of this discussion were as follows:

Some of the parents are deeply interested--however, this group appears to be a small proportion of the total group.

These parents show a great interest in school because they recognize their own limitations, and are anxious that their children have greater educational opportunities than they have had.

SECTION VII

GAINING THE CONFIDENCE OF PARENTS AND PUPILS

Chairman: James M. Nunes, District Superintendent, Alviso Elementary School District, Fremont

Leader: Bruce A. Peseau, Supervisor, Alum Rock Union Elementary School District, San Jose

Resource Person:

Gilbert T. Martinez, Principal, Lester W. Shields School, San Jose

Recorder: Hector Caraballo, Decoto Elementary School District, Union City

Background Discussion

The education of Spanish-speaking children and youth presents several challenging problem areas. The problems have been around a long time and gains have been made but slowly.

Major School Problems

1. Lack of understanding of the parents and children by school personnel.

2. Failure to recognize that many complex factors have slowed down the acculturation process for Mexican-Americans.

3. Children meet a new culture when they come to school, some are able to make an adjustment between the culture of the school and the culture of the home. Others deny one culture or the other, with disastrous effects on their personality development.

4. Important cultural differences are evident in

   a. Health standards

   b. Time orientation--the Mexican lives in the past and in the present, and may not do much planning for the future.

   c. Differences in child rearing practices.

5. Differences in the language of the school and the home.

   a. A small vocabulary in English may mean more problems than no English at all.

   b. Children quickly learn the language of the school and are often considered to have a more satisfactory vocabulary than they actually possess.

Suggestions for Understanding the Problem

1. Economic needs of necessity overshadow school needs. This fact may account for the feeling among some teachers that Mexican-American parents are not interested in education. Evidence seems to prove that they are interested but that much time, effort and anxiety have to go into earning a living for the family.

2. Social and cultural differences continue to present problems. In California, a majority of seasonal workers are Mexican-American. Language barriers, lack of resident status, real or imaginary discrimination, nonacceptance, some failure to realize the importance of education for future job preparation, and substandard living conditions add to the educational problems which confront schools today.

3. As differences among Mexican-American families increase, any generalizations regarding the group are less accurate and more dangerous. Judgment should be made on the basis of individuals or at least on members of a definite family group--not on members of the total Mexican-American culture.

4. Mexican-Americans like most other Americans pin their hopes on their children. Parents want their children to have a better life than they have enjoyed and recognize that in the United States education may be the answer to a better job, higher income and higher social status.

5. A common language, while important, is only a start; to be helpful to others we need to understand as much as we can about them. An inquiring mind not subject to prejudice, and genuine respect for individual and group differences are prime requisites.

6. Parents come to school for conferences, but unless they are met with respect and understanding, the meetings may not be smooth or successful.

7. Self-respect is essential. Disadvantaged people, of whom many are Mexican-American, are sometimes victims of practices that frustrate the development of self-respect.

Discrimination whether by law or custom, gives its victims ample evidence that they do not enjoy society's respect. Children should be helped to develop feelings of self-respect through successful participation in the school program.

8. So complex is the process of promoting the development of human beings that every school, even the best, is in constant need of adjustment and improvement. A school should be a vibrant changing place.

9. School success and recognition may mean rejection of a child by his peers, his family and even by members of the community.

10. A practical teaching of mental hygiene is that one cannot run away from himself or what he is. To do so, is to invite disaster. Somewhere along the way, each Mexican-American must make a stand and recognize the fact that if there is to be progress against those barriers which prevent and obstruct a more functional citizenship, he must retrieve his own dignity and work as a person with a specific ethnic antecedent who has a positive contribution to make to civilization. "No man can find a true expression for living who is ashamed of himself or his people."

Suggestions for Solving the Problems

1. Improve the child's self-image through many experiences with success.

2. Involve the parents in school activities.

3. Plan teacher in-service programs to provide information regarding the mores of the community.

4. Introduce Spanish into the curriculum of the school.

5. Accept the children and the parents as they are.

6. Concentrate on progress and do not insist on an ideal situation.

7. Recognize that adequate language development is basic to all school progress.

8. Cooperate with other public agencies when needed.

9. Call for special help from service clubs in order to meet special needs.

10. Demonstrate a real and genuine interest in the girls and boys.

Special Suggestions for Teachers

1. Be keenly aware of the possible cultural differences between yourself, your pupils and their parents.

2. Demonstrate an understanding of the cultural determinants of the parents.

3. Be aware of the tendency to undervalue or be critical of the cultural traits and attitudes of Spanish-speaking parents.

4. Realize that school success and recognition may mean rejection of a child by his peers, his family and even by members of the community.

5. Be aware of a possible breakdown of communication and use language that is clear, concise and simple.

6. Recognize that real acceptance includes acceptance of a person's language and his ways of expressing himself.

7. Make an effort to be less formal and more warm and personal when having conferences with Mexican-American parents.

   Allow positive feeling toward parents to have a somewhat freer rein than with Anglo parents.

8. By the same token, care should be taken lest an over-friendly, effusive, gushy approach may induce suspicion.

Special Suggestions for Administrators

1. Prepare Parent Teacher Association programs that are interesting to all parents.

2. Have coffee hour set aside for parents to visit the school. Include specific neighborhood "barrios" as well as persons who are active in the Parent Teacher Association.

3. Share information with staff members and work in close harmony with all members of the school staff.

4. Establish in-service training procedures for all staff personnel including the noncertificated.

5. Involve Mexican-Americans in parent-teacher education responsibility such as service on the Executive Board.

6. Serve Mexican-American food in the cafeterias.

7. Include family night as an annual parent-teacher education function, asking Mexican-American families to participate actively in the preparation for the event.

8. Teach Spanish as the foreign language in the school and have Spanish-speaking children help in pronouncing words.

9. Involve Spanish-speaking children in school programs especially in assemblies pertaining to the rich Spanish culture. These programs can be closely related to social studies units in grades three, four five and six.

Statements to Remember

A special problem needs special understanding and special attention.

The best way to gain a parent's confidence is through his children, and there is no better way than to demonstrate a real and genuine interest in the girls and boys.

"They are building Mexican-Americans better than ever."

Section VIII

PROVIDING FOR HEALTH NEEDS

Chairman: John Chavez, Teacher, Santa Fe Elementary School, Oakland

Leader: Refugio Cabello, Principal, Decoto Elementary School, Union City

Resource Person:

Burt M. Kebric, Associate Superintendent, Special Services, Tulare County, Visalia

Recorder: Anthony Juarez, Decoto Elementary School District, Union City

Communication was recognized as the key problem. During the discussion the following suggestions and recommendations were made:

In the Spanish-speaking community, even though some residents are familiar with the English language, they are frequently hesitant in speaking it and are much more comfortable using their own language. Interpreters from the community cannot always convey the proper information because they may be unfamiliar with the problem, they may be inadequate in either or both languages, or they may be sympathetic toward one group or the other and fail to present the information accurately. For these reasons public health personnel in Spanish-speaking areas should be encouraged to learn Spanish, or persons who already speak Spanish should be employed for service in these communities.

Health workers should endeavor to establish good rapport with the members of the Mexican-American community in order to break down possible barriers to performing their functions efficiently. In order to do this the health worker should acquaint himself not only with the language, but also with the culture, customs and habits of the Mexican-American people with whom he is working.

A Health Council consisting of professional people such as welfare workers, teachers, law-enforcement officials, priests, ministers, and others can often perform useful services. Such a Council should meet regularly to discuss health problems, to plan projects and to report accomplishments in the field. Others functions would be to exchange information and to provide coordination so that duplication of endeavors is avoided. The publication and dissemination of the work of such a committee broadens its field of usefulness.

Since many residents of a Mexican-American community are reluctant to approach a central service facility, field services should be provided wherever possible.

Efforts to approach the people as individuals or in their own groups, in order to convince them of the value of good health are frequently most successful. Instruction through visual media is an effective means of providing information.

Radio programs in Spanish are particularly effective in reaching a large audience. These health programs should be directed to both English and Spanish channels.

Health material designed for persons of all age groups should be printed both in English and in Spanish. The explanations in both languages, should be simple and free from technical terminology.

The health workers should make as many personal contacts in the community as he can so that he will come to know the problems at first hand. It is important that health workers become aware of new members entering the community or of those who leave it. Home visits are an effective means of getting to know the people. Information from such visits should be carefully studied so that better understanding of the habits and customs of the people may be achieved.

The influx of new Mexican immigrants is perpetuating cultural and language differences in many communities, and the problems are changing rapidly. For this reason continuous personal contact is of great importance.

The churches in a Mexican-American community are effective media of communication in reaching Spanish-speaking audiences. In addition, information regarding health can be given through meetings in schools, clubs or associations.

The orientation of personnel assigned for the first time to a Mexican-American community is of great importance. State and local health departments should provide such persons with material related to the language and culture of the Mexican-American people in order to help them accomplish their work with a maximum of efficiency.

SECTION IX

BUILDING GOOD CITIZENSHIP

Chairman: Joseph M. Santos, Director, Adult Education, Hayward Union High School District

Leader: James Crandall, Curriculum Research and Evaluation, Alameda County

Resource Persons:

Regge Minnitte, Principal, Henry Barnard Elementary School, Union City

Mrs. Elmira Rose, Representative, Community Service Organization and Youth and Student Placement Officer, State Department of Employment, Oakland

Recorder: John Maloney, Decoto Elementary School District, Union City

Expectations of a society determine which acts of its members will be considered desirable and which will be considered undesirable. The activities of a good citizen in one society or culture might very well be considered acts of poor or delinquent citizenship in a different culture. This is, of course, an example of extreme differences in societies. The same problem is present to a lesser degree when people from one culture enter another culture in which the mores and expectations are slightly different from what they are used to. An individual's citizenship will be judged by the extent to which he accepts responsbility for acts of everyday living that are considered to be important by the society in which he lives.

A society does not change rapidly to fit the actions of individuals. If it did, with the influx of widely diverse groups, the stability of the society would be lost and chaos would reign. In order for individuals to become effective citizens in a particular culture they must develop a set of guiding principles which they will translate into everyday actions that contribute to, perpetuate, and enhance the culture.

Some type of productive work is generally considered to be an important part of good citizenship in the present American culture. For most people, this will mean employment in a job. Employers generally are concerned with getting work done, and this necessitates having employees who fit into a pattern or job description, which will produce the employers' service or product in an economically efficient manner.

Children, particularly from a foreign cultural background, need to learn, realistically, the values and expectations of their new culture as it relates to employment. Teachers who adjust the classroom atmosphere and activities to the extent that Spanish-speaking children see only a diluted or unrealistic view of the culture and economy which they are entering are providing a disservice to both individual children and to the culture. These children need to learn that an employer will be more interested in operating his business at a profit than he will be in adjusting his work schedules, or values, to coincide with the cultural background of his employees. They need to be helped to understand that the bulk of the burden of adaptation is upon them, not society.

Schools through the development of curricula, and teachers through implementation of it, have a responsibility to help children from differing cultures develop a set of guiding principles compatible with the society which the children are entering, and in which they will be competing. The responsibilities of educators also include providing children with planned experiences in citizenship which will give them opportunities to apply and practice the guiding principles that they are learning. Particularly effective among these experiences are student government activities in individual classrooms, team and individual athletic sports in physical education, service club functions on a school-wide basis, and work experience programs.

Children who are exposed to one culture at home and a different culture in school need an opportunity to associate and work with children from the culture which they are entering during the school day. This means that care must be taken in homogeneous grouping of pupils for academic work, to assure that Spanish-speaking children are not completely separated from the other pupils during all periods of the school day. At the same time, educators need to recognize the hazards involved in the type of heterogeneous grouping which places Spanish-speaking children in a situation where they are continuously unable effectively to compete with other children.

SECTION X

HELPING SPANISH-SPEAKING YOUTH TAKE ADVANTAGE OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Chairman: Judson E. Taylor, Principal, James Logan High School, Union City

Leader: Ronald Lambert, Director of Pupil Personnel, James Logan High School, Union City

Resource Persons:

Anthony W. Ochoa, Dean of Boys, Hayward Union High School

Mark Seltzer, Graduate Counselor, Probation Department, Alameda County

Recorder: Louis Ambrosi, Decoto Elementary School District, Union City

Members of this group were in agreement that this is a basic problem and that much could be done to improve the situation as it exists at the present time. One of the problems is early identification of girls and boys who may drop out of school. Many failures take place in the early grades and continue to build up as the child proceeds through the school. Teachable size classes and sympathetic and knowledgeable teachers are the key to improvement in this area.

Girls and boys of Mexican-American background should identify with their culture and the schools should capitalize on the worth of this culture in every way. The schools have responsibility to help girls and boys recognize that each has his own dignity and that persons in the school respect his dignity and worth.

SECTION XI

BUILDING ON THE ASSETS
TEACHING SPANISH TO SPANISH-SPEAKING PUPILS

Chairman: Keith D. Alward, Superintendent and Principal, Alvarado Elementary School District

Leader: Leonard Swenson, Assistant Superintendent, Instruction, Merced City Schools

Resource Persons:

Mrs. Betty Hinman, Spanish Teacher, Tenaya Intermediate School, Merced

Mrs. Virginia Shattuck, 8th Grade Social Studies English Core Teacher, Tenaya Intermediate School, Merced

William De Simone, Principal, Tenaya Intermediate School, Merced

Recorder: Raymond Montoya, Decoto Elementary School District, Union City

The special class for Teaching Spanish to Spanish-speaking pupils at the Tenaya School in Merced was established during the 1962-63 school year to help the Mexican-American pupils become proficient in the use of the Spanish language. Another part of the program was planned to help the children understand the cultural and economic advantages of being truly bi-lingual. Although approximately fifty percent of the children in the Tenaya School are of Spanish-speaking background, great variations exist between individuals in the quality of Spanish which is spoken.

It was decided to test all of the children in grade seven in order to provide special instruction in advanced Spanish for the group which already had good facility in speaking the language. However, plans were that all children in grade seven would receive some instruction in Spanish. In the spring of 1962 all seventh graders were tested to discover their proficiency in spoken Spanish and to ascertain the level of their skills in reading and writing the language. Each child had an individual interview with a Spanish language specialist whose services were obtained through a grant from the National Defense Education Act.

In order to determine eligibility for the advanced class, pupils were tested in four language skills as follows: (1) listening comprehension, (2) speaking and conversation, (3) reading, and (4) writing. Their attitude toward improving their Spanish proficiency was assessed also.

A specially qualified teacher was employed to teach the advanced group, and an adequate supply of carefully selected material was made available. Magazines, newspapers, and books printed in Spanish encouraged extended reading. Since many of the children already were able to converse in Spanish, learning to read the language was not difficult for most of them.

Spanish-speaking persons from the community spoke to the girls and boys on the importance of completing their education at least through the high school. Vocational opportunities open to persons proficient in both English and Spanish were explained. From the inception of the program, discipline problems among the Mexican-American children decreased and the interest of members of the community in the school increased most appreciable. Attendance at all community affairs, especially the Parent Teachers Association Song and Dance Fiesta was much higher than had been noted in previous years.

In the spring of 1963 the same language specialist who had first tested the group, gave a test and conducted individual interviews to ascertain the growth made. He reported gains in reading comprehension, in grammar, and in composition. However, the most significant gains were noted in the personal interview. The pupils showed marked improvement in morale and in acceptance of their heritage as Mexican-Americans. As a result of these findings, the program will be extended to pupils in grade seven during the coming year. (1963-64)

Positive values of the program have been as follows:

1. Improvement in the quality of the Spanish spoken by the Mexican-American children.

2. Improvement in morale and in understanding and acceptance of the Mexican-American culture.

3. Provision of a successful educational experience through which the children could take advantage of their own abilities.

4. Increased understanding of the importance of bi-lingualism as it related to future employment possibilities.

With the ability to speak more than one language becoming increasingly important in our culture, schools such as the Tenaya School

have an important role to play because they hold the promise of producing a group of pupils who are truly bi-lingual. This is an asset which should be utilized not only for the benefit of the children, but also for the contribution they may be able to make to the general welfare.